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Serial No.: 10/527,467

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 5, 6, 9 and 13 and cancel without prejudice or limitation claims 7, 12 and 14 as indicated in the Listing of Claims.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1 1. (Currently amended) A diverter switch for branching off
2 bulk-material flows, having a rotary plug (1) disposed in a
3 stationary housing (2) having three connecting openings (4, 5, 6)
4 said rotary plug and housing providing a first position
5 connecting a first connecting-opening pair (4, 5) a second
6 position, connecting a second connecting-opening pair (4, 6), and
7 a gap (10) disposed between said rotary plug (1) and said housing
8 wherein the improvement comprises a rotary plug (1) and/or
9 housing (2) having at least one labyrinth seal arrangement (7),
10 having at least one labyrinth seal groove (8, 9), wherein the
11 labyrinth seal groove (8) of the rotary plug (1) is arranged

ROBERT MUELLER and
FRANZ-JOSEF VOGELSANG
Serial No.: 10/527,467

12 largely continuously around at least one opening of a through-
13 channel (3) and is axially displaced from an end of said through-
14 channel, and/or the labyrinth seal groove (9) of the housing (2)
15 is arranged largely continuously around at least one of the
16 connecting openings (4, 5, 6) and is axially or radially
17 displaced from an end of a connecting opening of said housing and
18 the gap (10) has a maximum width (W) smaller than or equal to
19 five-tenths of a millimeter ($W \leq 5/10$ mm).

1 2. (Original) The diverter switch according to Claim 1,
2 further comprising a plurality of labyrinth seal grooves (8, 9)
3 arranged next to one another.

1 3. (Original) The diverter switch according to claim 1 or 2
2 further comprising at least one feed opening (12) for a feed
3 channel for feeding a gap fluid into the gap (10) between rotary
4 plug (1) and housing (2).

ROBERT MUELLER and
FRANZ-JOSEF VOGELSANG
Serial No.: 10/527,467

1 4. (Original) The diverter switch according to claim 1 or 2
2 further comprising a feed opening (12) in the labyrinth seal
3 groove (8, 9).

1 5. (Currently amended) The diverter switch according to
2 claim 1 or 2 further comprising means for insuring ~~the~~ a pressure
3 of ~~the~~ a gap fluid is greater than a pressure of ~~the~~ a conveying
4 fluid.

1 6. (Currently amended) The diverter switch according to
2 claim 1 or 2 wherein the composition of ~~the~~ a gap fluid is
3 substantially the same as the composition of ~~the~~ a conveying
4 fluid.

ROBERT MUELLER and
FRANZ-JOSEF VOGELSANG
Serial No.: 10/527,467

1 7. Cancel without prejudice.

1 8. (Original) The diverter switch of claim 1 or 2 wherein
2 the maximum width (W) of the gap 10 is smaller than or equal to
3 three-tenths of a millimetre ($W \leq 3/10$ mm).

1 9. (Currently amended) A fluid diverter device
2 comprising:

3 (a) a housing having a plurality of through channels and a
4 seat for a rotatable plug;

5 (b) a rotatable plug disposed in said seat selectively
6 rotatably interconnecting at least one of said plurality of
7 through channels;

8 (c) a labyrinth seal having a plurality of grooves disposed
9 on said rotatable plug and disposed on said housing, said
10 plurality of sealing grooves displaced axially or radially from
11 an end of one of said plurality of through channels and disposed

ROBERT MUELLER and
FRANZ-JOSEF VOGELSANG
Serial No.: 10/527,467

12 between said housing and said rotatable plug; and
13 (d) a fluid gap seal disposed intermediate said
14 housing and said rotatable plug in communication with said
15 plurality of sealing grooves of said labyrinth seal.

1 10. (Original) The fluid diverter of claim 9 further
2 comprising at least one feed channel in communication with said
3 fluid gap seal.

1 11. (Original) The fluid diverter of claim 10 further
2 comprising means for increasing the pressure of the gap fluid to
3 a pressure greater than the conveying fluid.

1 12. Cancel without prejudice.

ROBERT MUELLER and
FRANZ-JOSEF VOGELSANG
Serial No.: 10/527,467

1 13. (Currently amended) The fluid diverter of claim ~~12~~ 11
2 wherein said plurality of grooves disposed on said rotatable plug
3 and said plurality of grooves disposed on said housing are
4 concentrically staggered.

1 14. Cancel without prejudice.